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**Reflection #1**: Please access the School of Education’s Conceptual Framework ideals at http://schooled.brooklyn.cuny.edu/IR-CF.htm

How do the ideals of social justice, collaboration, critical self-evaluation and diversity align with our course objectives and outcomes, and pertain to us in our role as pedagogues?

The ideals of social justice, collaboration, critical self-evaluation, and diversity are the main themes highlighted in the School of Education’s Conceptual Framework. These concepts are extremely important in the New York State Education System. The population of students in New York is extremely diverse, and teachers must acknowledge and understand the need for sensitivity towards diversity. Diversity does mean simply race; it refers to ethnicity, religion, class, sexual identity, gender, culture, or language. Teachers must have knowledge about their diverse population, and value the students’ differences, in order to educate their students effectively. Social justice can be defined asthe idea of creating a society or institution that is based on the principles of equality and solidarity, that understands and values human rights, and that recognizes the dignity of every human being (Wikipedia definition). Social injustice is a concept that is rather complex, however teachers must understand the need for social justice in the classroom, in order to create an atmosphere conducive for learning. Collaboration is not only a theme, but a method of teaching emphasized throughout the New York State Education System. Learning to work as a team alongside other teachers is a skill that is needed to successfully educate students. Through teacher collaboration, educators learn from one another mistakes and accomplishments. The concept of collaboration is not only present in teaching methods, but also in student-learning. Students are divided into groups, and learn to work as a team. Critical self evaluation is an extremely important concept. Teaching is an art that requires a great deal of reflection. A successful teacher requires practice, experience, and learning from one’s mistakes. Teaching is a career, in which one is expected to evolve, and constantly learn and adapt to their students’ needs. Self –evaluation is crucial in order to ensure that one’s teaching is effective. It allows a teacher to reflect on his/her skills, and to improve in areas that are not as successful as other.

These main ideals of social justice, collaboration, critical self-evaluation, and diversity are heavily emphasized throughout our course objectives. The purpose of action research is for practicing teachers to research current issues, and find solutions that can realistically be applied to classrooms. We are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the ethical issues of research and discuss the implications for the work as a teacher-researcher. This objective pertains to the four main themes of social justice, diversity, self-evaluation, and collaboration. Social justice and diversity are considered ethical issues that are in need of action research. Educating ourselves on such issues is crucial in creating a socially just learning environment. Self-evaluation and collaboration pertain to teaching methods, but can also be researched in order to ensure that teaching methods are successful. There are many issues found throughout education system, related to these four concepts, which have an impact on the effectiveness of a teacher. It is our job as teachers, to identify these issues, and use our own experience, to gain a better understanding of the issue, and find the best solution. Throughout this class, we critique one another, and help one another, while conducting our action research projects. This is a true example of teacher- collaboration. Throughout my Masters education, each professor has given me the same piece of advice, “Do not re-invent the wheel.” I believe this idea is directly related to teacher collaboration. Teachers must work together to provide the best possible education for students, rather than competing against one another. Teachers must value the experience of their colleagues, and learn from their experiences, rather than attempting to reconstruct teaching methods that are in place. This concept is emphasized in our Action Research classroom. We offer one another guidance and support, as we complete our research projects. This is excellent preparation for our future teacher to teacher relationships, in which we will choose to help one another, and work as a team. The idea of critical self- evaluation is extremely important in conducting research. Teacher-researchers must be able to evaluate their own work, understand their mistakes, or understand where their research needs improvements, in order to enhance the validity of the research. The course objective clearly states, one must reflect on his/her own practice and examine implications for future work.

This course does an excellent job in highlighting and emphasizing the School of Education’s Conceptual Framework ideals. As stated in the School of Education’s mission statement, **“**Through collaborative action, teaching, and research, we develop our students’ capacities to create socially just, intellectually vital, aesthetically rich and compassionate communities that value equity and excellence, access and rigor.” This class upholds the mission statement, by challenging students to research ethical or problematic issues, conduct studies, find solutions, and work and guide one another. We are encouraged to review our work, and find ways to improve our work. We are encouraged to research issues of interest that we can address in our current or future classrooms.